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for News Releases
and Other Materials
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NEWS

A plant genome program is being developed and strengthened its strong global position in agriculture and profitability. Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Trutter said today. USDA's Agricultural Research Service has been assigned responsibility for providing federal leadership in developing the genome mapping program. ARS will act as a focal point for a system of interrelated federal research. The program is now being conducted by federal and state agencies.

Remarks

Remarks

News Division, Room 404 A United States Department of Agriculture Washington, D C 20250

Room 404 A United States Dept
RISAY VRI IRI VI
REMI T A VI
BRARY 789

[illegible]

First I will explain this ceremony. We know it requires
you to bring your art, your expensive gesture in our art
but not schedule. And it's a tremendous gesture in our art
but not schedule. And it's a tremendous gesture in our art

News Division Room 404-A United States Department of Agriculture Washington D.C. 20250

USA ANNOUNCES QUOTAS AND REFUND RUM FOR PUERTO RICAN FILIER TIBACCO
WASHINGTON, March 1 - The U.S. Department of Agriculture today
announced marketing quotas for cigar filier (type 44) tobacco for the 1989
and 1990 crops. The 1989 national average allotment for this and the 1989
quota will be zero.
USA must prohibit most

USIA must proclaim marketing quotas whenever supplies of a particular tobacco become excessive. Since an oversupply of cigar filler (type tobacco currently exists, USIA proclaimed quotas and set the 1989 acreage allotment at zero.

...the 1989
...will be held at area polling places on March 29 to
...growers went marketing quotas in effect for cigar filler type
...for the marketing years 1989, 1990 and 1991
...were vote in favor of...

...in favor of the quota, quotas will be in effect for
crops and a penalty would apply for any 1989 crop marketing
disapproved, production will not be limited and price support
available
Bruce Merkley (202) 467-0787

Price Verkle (202) 447-0787

Diane O'Connor (202) 447-4026
Issued Feb 16, 1989

News Division Room 404 A United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D C 20250

THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
The People's Department

REACTION The U. S. Department of Agriculture was created by an Act of Congress in 1882 to acquire and diffuse among the people of the United States useful information on subjects connected with agriculture in the most general and comprehensive manner that would The first commissioner of agriculture was directed to conduct experiments, collect statistics, and distribute new seeds and plants. This broad law remains the legal authority by which USDA operates today. Seven men served as Commissioners of Agriculture.

ABOVE:
STATUS

Exactly 100 years ago, on Feb. 15, 1889, USDA became the eighth executive department to achieve cabinet rank. Ni-
Colman was named the first secretary of agriculture by
President Grover Cleveland.

USDA
TODAY

Today, the secretary of agriculture administers broad aimed at maintaining America's safe, abundant, and res priced supply of food and fiber, while protecting and ing the nation's soil and water resources. USDA has a budget of about \$70 billion and has 112,000 full-and employees, making it the fifth largest agency in the government.

At its creation, President Abraham Lincoln said the
of Agriculture was to be the People's department--
people than any other. One hundred and twenty seven
later, USDA is still the federal agency closest to the
of people. It has the most widespread district
setvsi throughout the nation of any of the execu-
sents of government. Most USDA employees work far
Washington, D.C., located in almost every county in
USA, 100, in many titles

SWA empl yers are engaged 378 different occupatio
nally ranging from botanists, soil conservationi
nists, to loan specialists, meat inspectors
rangers Their activities not only touch the live
American daily, but affect the well-being of mill
throughout the world

Q137

USDA news releases and other news, economic and marketing reports are available at
USDA's EDISERVICE. Call (202) 447-5505

Sandy Miller Hays (301) 344-4089
Jim Greene (202) 447-4026
Issued: March 3, 1989

News Division Room 404 A United States Department of Agriculture Washington D C 20250

WASHINGTON, May 11 - Scientists with the U.S. Department of Agriculture are testing a hormone - called UHT that may switch catfish gender.

Agri cultural Research Service is aimed at making the most of other scientists' findings and male cattle grow faster than females. Coudie is a reproductive physiologist at ARS's British Genetics Research Laboratory, Haringly (H), Notts., where Carmichael is a geneticist and research leader.



ANALOGOUS AND TRY IN TO PRODUCE
MAY BE CATCH IN THE BY ADDING
A SMALL AMOUNT OF WATER TO THE
EGGS. THIS MAY BE DONE BY
ADDING A SMALL AMOUNT OF WATER TO THE
EGGS.

Reproductive physiological (chrysi-
nucle and gonocyst) vary
Michael gauge the growth rate of
fish and their resistance to
disease. A very high water quality
log to 8.8/100-7

USDA news releases and other news, economic and marketing reports are available electronically.
USDA's EDI SERVICE Call 202-447-5505

Testimony

News Division, Room 404 A, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250

STATEMENT OF

STATEMENT OF
EWEN M. WILSON
ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR ECONOMICS
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BEFORE THE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON COTTON, RICE AND SUGAR
JAN 22, 1969

February 22, 1967

Members of the Subcommittee, I appreciate
the hearing on the upland cotton

the Food Security Act of 1985 substantially program. The objective was to make U.S. in the world market. During the first year of the 1985 Act--the 1986 crop year--it seemed to exports more than tripled from the abnormally low level. U.S. mill use increased 17 percent and were drawn down. Stocks which had grown to a of 9.3 million bales were reduced to 4.9 million costs were large, over \$2 billion in fiscal year export gains seemed to justify this cost and people ic that carry-over stocks could be kept to the 4- appropriate in the 1985 Act.

optimism, however, has faded. Exports have not grown
5--they have declined. Stocks have not been held to the
they are now projected to be above 9

Foreword

The Office of Information's News Division issues all national news and feature releases produced by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. It ensures that releases are written in a clear, consistent news style and follow departmental policy.

The goal for any news release is that it be used by the media. Releases that the media need to rewrite extensively may not be used. Rewriting also introduces chances for errors and misinterpretations.

This guide will help agency information staffs prepare USDA news releases and other press materials that follow a consistent style and require a minimum of rewriting by the media. It also augments Departmental Regulations 1440-2 (Appendix III) on policies and procedures for disseminating news releases and other press materials.

The guide includes sample formats for a news release, notice to correspondents, feature release, correction, advance news release, advisory committee announcement, backgrounder, program announcement, remarks, and Congressional hearing testimony.

News Division
Office of Information
Office of Governmental and Public Affairs
April 1989

AD-33 Bookplate
(1-88)

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LIBRARY

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U.S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL LIBRARY

JAN 23 1991

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1885

Policy

ACCURACY--The originating agency is responsible for the accuracy of information provided to the News Division in releases and speeches.

ADVANCE NOTICE--Notify the News Division as soon as you can when you have an unanticipated rush release so we can help issue it quickly.

ADVISORY COMMITTEES--A news release announcing an advisory committee meeting should be issued at least seven days before the meeting. If media interest warrants, a news release may be issued or a briefing scheduled immediately after the meeting. Except for advance announcements of meetings, News Division does not use the USDA logo for releases about advisory committee activities. Such releases should be printed on the advisory committee's letterhead, if it has one, or the News Division will use a generic advisory committee letterhead. (See example on p. 24 of Appendix II.)

APPOINTMENTS--The News Division will issue and distribute national news releases on new personnel appointments only when they refer to the secretary, deputy secretary, under and assistant secretaries and their deputies, other officials requiring Senate confirmation, and the head and second-in-charge of an agency.

Other appointments, such as agency program directors, agency regional or state directors, and executive committee members, should be announced through regional or "hometown" releases by agencies. (See also RESIGNATION, RETIREMENTS, p. 7; and OBITUARIES, p. 5.)

ATTRIBUTION--All USDA news releases must be attributed to a USDA employee or official, not just to the U.S. Department of Agriculture or an agency. The attribution does not, however, have to be in the lead. If the person quoted is not in Washington change the dateline to match his or her location. (See also ATTRIBUTION, p. 9; DATELINE, p. 9; and PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT, p. 6.)

You may quote an official from the Office of the Secretary and one from an agency in the same release. If two or more USDA agencies have a combined release, each agency may quote one of its officials. Quote an official of a non-USDA agency only in joint releases with other executive departments or agencies. Otherwise, do not attribute announcements to other sources such as association, company or Congressional spokespersons. Those offices can issue their own releases.

BACKGROUND (FACT SHEET)--Use a backgrounder (fact sheet) to provide history and other factual information on a program or activity. Backgrounders may supplement an announcement or provide information when there is no news to announce. They should not contain opinion or attributions. (See also ISSUE BRIEFING PAPER, p. 4.)

BRAND NAMES--Do not use brand, trade or company names except where needed for clarity, as, for example, when announcing the award of a research contract, or when naming a commercial product being recalled because of food-safety problems.

CLEARANCE--Agency information divisions must clear all releases they originate through their agencies and provide the News Division with the name of the highest ranking official in the agency who cleared the release. The News Division staff will obtain all further clearances, including those from the appropriate under or assistant secretary, and, if necessary, the secretary, other USDA agencies, other federal departments and the White House. (See Appendix I, p. 14, on clearance procedures followed by News Division.)

CLOSING TIME--The News Division will not routinely issue news releases after 3 p.m. unless the release is urgent or has already been scheduled for late release. Releases issued after 3 p.m. can not be included in the packets delivered that day to area news media, but will go in the packets the next business day. (See also RELEASE TIMES, p. 7; and PACKETS, p. 5.)

COMBINED RELEASES--When two or more releases to be issued the same day by the same agency or by more than one agency contain common subject matter, the News Division may combine them into one release. An agency may issue separate releases regionally.

COMMENTS--In news releases inviting comment, do not say "interested people should write to. . ." We assume that only interested people would comment. Do not solicit comment. It is sufficient to say that "Comments may be sent to. . ."

CONTACTS--The originating agency and the News Division will each provide the full name and telephone number of one public affairs specialist on every release to help media people who may have questions. The contacts listed must be available until close of business on the day of the release and the next working day. The listing of a contact is not a byline.

CORRECTION--When an inaccuracy is found in a release that has already been issued, it should be corrected in another release. The correction should identify the story to be corrected, give the sense or major thrust of the original story, and identify what is being corrected. Don't repeat the inaccuracy in the correction. A correction carries the same USDA press release number as the original story followed by the letter A, e.g., 100A-88 is a correction for release number 100-88. (See sample, p. 23.)

DISTRIBUTION--National releases cleared and issued by the News Division are distributed as follows: (1) posted to in-house news media; (2) transmitted over the EDI (Electronic Dissemination of Information) system; (3) delivered by messenger to news media in the National Press Building and nearby downtown D.C. locations; and (4) mailed to selected media lists maintained by USDA's Office of Operations for the News Division. The News Division may use additional distribution methods as appropriate. Agencies may make further distribution to their own mailing lists, but these lists should not duplicate names on News Division lists. (See also MAILING LISTS, pp. 5, 31.)

EDI--All news releases, notices to correspondents, features, program announcements, backgrounders, and issue briefing papers edited and issued by the News Division are available on the EDI (Electronic Distribution of Information) system immediately after their release. Agencies are responsible for transmitting to EDI any regional releases, reports or other materials they ask the News Division to post.

EEO--USDA, like all other federal agencies, is an equal opportunity employer, so there is no need to restate this fact in news releases and features, nor to print it on the news release masthead.

ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION--News releases and other press materials should be sent electronically to the News Division via either Dialcom (AGR003) or Telemail (DWarren). Follow these instructions for sending releases electronically:

- Use no more than 78 characters per line.
- Do not underscore. Any underscored character will not be transmitted. You may, however, use lines which do not underscore any characters, such as lines separating parts of a table.
- Delete any computer or word processor control characters in the text. They probably will not transmit correctly and may garble the words and lines that follow.
- At "subject," identify your agency, the nature of the message and the person at News Division to whom it is addressed.
(Example: ARS news release on spider mites for Jim Greene.)
- Call the News Division editor when you transmit a release. The editor will not necessarily check the mailbox for releases unless you call.
- Use a #, centered, to mark the end of the release.

All agencies should be able to transmit releases electronically via Dialcom or Telemail. If you currently do not have this capability, you should obtain it. In the meantime, the News Division can accept releases on Lexitron/Raytheon or Lexitype floppy disks only. News Division cannot retype lengthy news releases, or those containing tables, from hard copy and may refuse to accept releases not provided electronically or on a Lexitron or Lexitype disk.

FEATURE--News features are informative, well-written stories that are people oriented and go beyond the straight news announcements on USDA programs and policies. Use feature releases for "soft news"--information about interesting programs, activities, and employees that is not necessarily time-sensitive and does not announce new policy or programs. Photographs or line art often accompany these stories. Features should have a "catchy" lead and may include more quotations than straight news releases but otherwise follow normal style guidelines. They should be released a week or more in advance of special events or holidays to assure maximum pickup by the media. (See sample, p. 18.)

FEDERAL REGISTER--Federal Register notices are available to the public--including the media--the day before they are published. Therefore, news releases on items appearing in the Federal Register should be issued the day before or earlier. Put any reference to publication in the Federal Register in the last paragraph of the release. News releases do not need to be prepared for all Federal Register notices, only for those in which the general news media have an interest.

IN-HOUSE PRESS NOTICES--Several news services, including AP, UPI, Reuters, Knight Ridder Financial, Agridata, and AP radio, maintain offices at USDA and are collectively called the in-house press. Any notices or invitations to briefings, meetings, etc., extended by agencies to any of the in-house reporters should be extended to all. The easiest way to do this is to bring the notice, invitation, etc., to News Division for posting. (See also POSTING, p. 6.)

ISSUE BRIEFING PAPER--Use the briefing paper format to provide detailed explanation, including USDA policy, on current issues of interest to the agricultural community. IBP's differ from backgrounders in that they contain attributed opinion, preferably from all sides of the issue.

LEGISLATION--USDA does not issue any news releases which could be interpreted as urging Congress to vote for or against any legislation or appropriation, nor does it include in releases suggestions that the public contact elected representatives to support or oppose pending legislation.

LEAD TIME--Agencies should provide the News Division with drafts of news releases at least one day in advance of the date they are to be issued. For example, a release scheduled for 10 a.m. release on Wednesday should be provided by 10 a.m. on Tuesday. If that much lead time cannot be given, the agency should alert the News Division that a rush release will be coming. (see ADVANCE NOTICE, p. 1.) See also Appendix I, p. 14, for a description of the steps News Division must take to clear and issue a news release. Lead time for feature releases, backgrounders and issue briefing papers is longer.

LETTERHEAD--All news releases and announcements issued or posted by the News Division will be printed on either USDA News, agency or special letterhead paper. (See also SECURITY, p. 8; ADVISORY COMMITTEE, p. 1.)

MAILING LISTS--News release mailing lists should contain only news media names, including trade press. Agencies may establish their own mailing list for non-media names. Non-media may also be placed on the mailing list for the weekly publication, "Selected Speeches and News Releases." (See also DISTRIBUTION, p. 3.)

MARKET SENSITIVE--Agencies should notify the News Division if a news release contains market-sensitive information and specify the release time.

NEWS CRITERIA--USDA news releases should: (1) announce new and revised policies, programs, regulations and activities; (2) be timely; (3) be of national significance; and (4) be written in a clear, concise, understandable news style. The News Division will not issue releases that do not meet these criteria.

NOTE TO EDITORS--A short note after the text of a news release providing additional information to the media, for example, the availability of photographs or review copies of publications. (See sample, p. 19.)

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS--A short advisory providing information to news media about a planned press event, meeting or conference. Notices should be no longer than a half page. (See sample, p. 20.)

OBITUARIES--USDA does not issue obituaries of USDA employees as news releases unless they are of incumbents in jobs which qualify for appointment releases. Obituaries on other USDA employees may be posted if media interest warrants. They should be printed on agency letterhead.

PACKETS--"Packets" of USDA news materials are delivered by messengers daily to news media offices in downtown Washington. The packets are 9x12-inch envelopes containing all the news releases, announcements, speeches and other news materials issued by the News Division up to 3 p.m. each day. Agencies may provide the News Division with 250 copies of reports and publications small enough to fit the envelopes for distribution in the packets. If agencies want to distribute other materials in the packets, they should discuss it with the News Division chief. Materials should be accompanied by a note from the agency requesting packet distribution and delivered to room 404-A by 2 p.m. Any materials received past the deadline will be held for the next day.

PHOTOGRAPHS--Agencies may provide good quality B&W photographs for either news or feature releases. They should consult with the news release editor before having screened prints of the photos so the editor may determine the size of the print and how the photo should be cropped. They should also make sure a negative and supply of glossy prints are on file in the Photography Division.

POSTING--The News Division considers a news release to be issued when it is "posted," i.e., copies are provided to USDA's in-house press, placed in the rack outside the News Division offices, and entered into the EDI system. All news releases and other materials edited by the News Division are posted.

Agencies may also provide 20 copies of publications, reports and regional releases to be posted. These materials should be delivered to room 404-A and accompanied by a note specifying the posting time. (See also RELEASE TIMES, p. 7.) The News Division may refuse to post materials which do not follow these requirements. Agency information personnel who wish to have the News Division post materials other than agency reports, publications and regional releases, should discuss it first with the News Division public affairs specialist who handles that agency or with the division chief.

POSTING TIMES-- See RELEASE TIMES.

PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT--An announcement about a program change that is of interest only to a specific industry. Program announcements need not be attributed to a person, but should include a contact for more information. They may be prepared on agency letterhead and posted in the same way as agency reports and regional releases without further News Division clearances. Or, if they are of national significance, they may be edited and cleared by the News Division and printed on USDA program announcement masthead. Distribution will be limited to posting and mailing to specific interest lists. (See also REPORTS, p. 7; and ATTRIBUTION, p. 1.)

PUBLICATIONS--Generally, the News Division does not issue news releases on publications, including reports and studies, preferring to distribute the documents or executive summaries. However, exceptions may be made for lengthy documents which have no summaries and documents in limited supply. Such releases may include NOTES TO EDITORS (see pp. 5 and 19) announcing availability of media copies.

PUFFERY--The News Division will not issue press materials that could be considered as puffery or self-aggrandizement and the primary purpose of which is to promote USDA or any of its agencies or individuals.

REGIONAL RELEASES--Agencies may prepare on agency letterhead and distribute to their own mailing lists regional releases which contain information of interest to only a few states or one region of the country. These do not need to be cleared or edited by the News Division. However, one information copy of each release issued from an agency's headquarters must be delivered to the chief of the News Division on the date of release. If the agency wants the release posted, it must provide 20 copies to the News Division with written posting instructions. (See POSTING, p. 6.) Regional releases should not be used for national news nor should they be distributed nationally.

RELEASE TIMES--The News Division will coordinate the release of all news with the Office of Congressional Relations after consulting with the agency. (See Appendix I for the steps required to clear and issue a press release.) Standard release, or posting, times are: 10 a.m., 2 p.m., and 3 p.m. At those times News Division personnel deliver copies of releases to the in-house reporters, place them on the news release distribution rack and make them available on EDI. In general, all releases and other materials should be posted at one of those three times. Exceptions are releases which are being distributed at an event such as an 11 a.m. news conference, urgent releases which could not make the 3 p.m. deadline, and releases which must be issued before a market opens or after it closes. Most in-house reporters do not arrive at USDA until 10 a.m., so there is little value in posting a release before that time. Agencies should avoid requesting non-standard release times.

The information in a news release must not be provided outside USDA before the release is posted to the media. Draft news releases should never be given to anyone outside USDA.

REMARKS, TESTIMONY--Selected speeches and Congressional testimony by USDA officials may be posted by the USDA News Division. (See sample, pp. 25, 26.)

REPORTS--Routine, recurring reports and releases with limited audiences should not be issued as national news releases. Examples of information in this category include "Food Purchase Reports" (AMS), wheat and feed grains daily price 5-day moving average (ASCS), and nitrosamines in bacon (FSIS). (See also PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT, p. 6; and POSTING, p. 6.)

RESIGNATIONS, RETIREMENTS--The News Division prefers to include retirements or resignations in releases announcing the new appointment to the same job. However, when such an announcement is not imminent, we may issue releases for limited distribution on retirements and resignations from the same jobs for which we would announce appointments. (See APPOINTMENTS, p. 3.)

SECURITY--Agencies can help the News Division ensure that information in news releases is not released prematurely or accidentally by complying with these measures: (1) note any market sensitive information and specify a release time (see also MARKET SENSITIVE, p. 5); (2) all materials for posting must be printed on USDA, agency or special letterhead or masthead paper; the News Division will not post materials duplicated on plain paper; (3) personnel retrieving news release drafts from electronic mailboxes should ensure that the message is read only by the addressee or his/her supervisor.

Style

ACRONYMS--Spell out U.S. Department of Agriculture in the first reference. Any further references should be to "USDA," not "the department." Do not put acronyms for agencies in parentheses after the agency name for which they stand. If the agency name is long, use the standard agency acronym without parentheses in further reference to the agency. Treat other federal departments and agencies the same with regard to acronyms. (The U.S. Department of the Interior; USDI's Bureau of Land Management; BLM.) Use an acronym for a complicated program name or device (i.e., scanning electron micrograph (SEM)) in parentheses on first reference and the acronym alone in further references if it will avoid repetition of a cumbersome name and promote clarity.

ACTIVE VOICE--Write in the active voice, rather than passive. For example, use "Farmers have harvested the winter wheat crop," rather than "The winter wheat crop has been harvested."

ADDRESS--The mailing address for the U.S. Department of Agriculture is Washington, D.C. 20250. There is no need to add "14th & Independence" to a mailing address. Some agencies have their own P.O. box numbers and zip codes which may be used instead of the 20250 zip code. A room in the South Building should be listed as Room 7186-S, not 7186 South Building. A room in the Administration Building is Room 603-A, 603-E, or 603-W, as appropriate. Give directions to the South Building as 14th & Independence, S.W., or 12th & Independence, S.W., depending on which entrance you expect people to use. Directions to the Administration Building are 14th & Independence, S.W., or, simply, The Mall.

Keep mailing addresses for, and directions to, other USDA locations, including Hyattsville and Beltsville, as simple as possible.

ADVANCE RELEASES--There may be cases where you want to use an advance slug and distribute material before the release date to give reporters time to prepare their stories. The advance slug goes above the headline. The dateline is the day the story is released, not the day the release is issued. Beware the timing on the advance slug. If you want the story used in the Jan. 5 morning newspapers, the slug should read: Advance for Release at 6:30 p.m. EST, Wednesday, Jan. 4. This slug will make material available for evening broadcasts Jan. 4 and for morning newspapers Jan. 5.

The slug, Advance for Release 6:30 a.m. EST, Thursday, Jan. 5, will make the materials available for Jan. 5 morning broadcasts and afternoon papers.

If you don't want the material broadcast or printed until after a specific time, as, for example, a 10 a.m. news conference, then the slug should read: Advance for release 10 a.m. EST, Thursday, Jan. 5.

Note the time is always given as Eastern Standard (EST) or Eastern Daylight (EDT) Time. If an event is occurring in another time zone, convert to Eastern time, e.g., advance a news release to be issued in

conjunction with a 10 a.m. San Francisco news conference for 1 p.m. Eastern time.

AP STYLE--In general, follow the style of the Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual. When there is a conflict between the AP and the USDA guidelines, the USDA guidelines take precedence. The News Division can provide information on purchasing copies of the Stylebook. The cost is \$8.75 per copy (\$8.50 per copy on orders of five or more).

ATTRIBUTION--"Said" is the best word for attribution. Use "said" rather than such terms as "stated," "noted," "pointed out," "commented" or "explained." (See also ATTRIBUTION, p. 3)

CAPITALIZATION--Follow the AP Stylebook for capitalization. As a general rule, limit the use of capitals. Proper names, including official program names, are capitalized. Agency names are capitalized. Capitalize titles such as secretary, administrator, etc., only when they are used directly before a name. When titles are used alone, or they are set off by commas, they should be lowercased. (See also PROGRAM NAMES, p. 11, and TITLES, p. 13.) All words that are capitalized when part of a proper name should be lowercased when not referring to a specific body or program. Do not capitalize variety names, crop type or class, or the common nouns they modify. Some examples of correct capitalization and lowercase:

Secretary of Agriculture James E. Smith
the secretary of agriculture
the secretary

Mary B. Brown, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service,
the Food Security Act of 1985; the act
the Export Enhancement Program; agricultural export programs
red winter wheat; flue-cured tobacco
federal and state governments
Maryland Department of Agriculture

CITIES--Cities that stand alone in datelines also stand alone in text. (See DATELINE, p. 9.)

COMMAS--Use AP, not GPO, style for commas. A basic difference is that in AP style commas are not used before the conjunction in a simple series. (Ex.: The farmer raised cows, hogs and sheep.) However, a comma is used before the concluding conjunction if a part of the series itself includes a conjunction. (Ex.: The farmer had bacon, muffins, and strawberries and cream for breakfast.) Use a comma also before the concluding conjunction in a complex series of phrases. (See also DATES, p. 10.)

DASHES--Dashes are used after the date on a release and to set off items in a list and some phrases within a sentence. Dashes--produced on the typewriter and word processing keyboards by using two hyphens--should not have a space on either side.

DATELINE--USDA News Releases are datelined with the city where the person to whom the story is being attributed is located on the day it is released.

Usually that is Washington. If an announcement must be made by the agency administrator and he or she is out of town, dateline the city where the administrator is located. If you want a Washington dateline, attribute the story to another official who is in Washington. (See also **ATTRIBUTION**, p. 1.) The name of the city should uppercased. Large, well-known cities, including Washington, stand alone in the dateline without a state name. (See AP Stylebook heading "Datelines" for a list of cities that stand alone.) All others should be followed by the state names, abbreviated according to AP style. (See **STATES**, p. 12.)

DATES--Do not use the year when it is obvious. For example, use "Comments are due June 30" in a release issued June 1. But "the program will begin operating Jan. 30, 1991," in a release dated Dec. 1, 1989. Always use cardinal, not ordinal, numbers in dates. (Dec. 1, Feb. 3, March 8, not Dec. 1st, Feb. 3rd, March 8th). (See also **DAYS**, p. 10; and **MONTHS**, p. 11.)

DAYS--Capitalize and spell out days of the week. Use abbreviations only in tables.

DEPARTMENT/AGENCY NAMES--Refer to the "U.S. Department of Agriculture" in the lead or second paragraph of a release. Normally place agency names after "U.S. Department of Agriculture," most likely with the title of the agency official being quoted in the news release. (Ex.: . . . according to John B. Brown, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service.) Any further reference to USDA should be "USDA," not "the USDA" or "the department." (See also **ACRONYMS**, p. 8.)

ENDING A RELEASE--End a press release or feature with a single # symbol, centered, two lines below the last line of the release. Notes to Editors start two lines below the # and are single-spaced.

FORMATS--News releases and other press materials are double-spaced, have margins set at 12 and 90 (78 character-wide lines) and paragraph indents of seven spaces, and are printed in 12-pitch type. Single space the last few paragraphs to avoid going to another page. See Appendix II (pages 16-26) for formats of a news releases, notice to correspondents, feature release, note to editors, program announcement, backgrounder, correction, advance release, advisory committee announcement, remarks and testimony.

HEADLINE--Use all caps for news release headlines and limit them to one line. The headline should have a subject and a verb, and briefly identify the primary action being announced. (Exs.: **USDA ANNOUNCES RULES FOR DROUGHT EMERGENCY AID** or **TWO CHARGED IN FOOD STAMP FRAUD.**)

HUNDREDWEIGHT--the abbreviation for hundredweight is cwt, without a period.

JARGON--Avoid undefined words and phrases that only a particular industry or group will understand. The audience for every news release includes editors, writers and other people who know little, if anything, about the subject.

LEAD--Write the lead paragraph of a news release so it can stand alone as a news brief, if necessary. Try to put as many of the W's (who, what, when, where and why) as possible in the lead. Leads for feature releases need not be as substantive.

MONTHS--Abbreviate January, February, and August through December when using them with a specific date. (Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec.) Do not abbreviate these months when they are used alone or with only a year and no specific date. All other months should be spelled out at all times. These rules apply to datelines as well as text. When referring to a month, day, and year, set off the year with commas. For a month and year alone, do not set off the year with commas. Do not use the year when it is obvious. Examples: Jan. 2, 1990, is the target date; January 1987; April 30, 1988; The comment period ended Sept. 30, 1987; Comments are due Nov. 20 (in a news release issued the same year).

NAMES--Use a person's full name in the first reference. Use only the last name in further references. (See also TITLES, p. 13.)

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS--Place the slug NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS where the headline would normally go, and the dateline as it would be in a regular release. End the notice with the name and phone number of a contact. (See also NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS, pp. 5 and 20.)

NUMERALS--Spell out numbers below 10; use figures for 10 and above. These guidelines apply when numbers are used in a series. But, use all figures for percentages, dollars and cents. Examples:
--They had 10 cows, three pigs and 24 chickens.
--6 cents, \$1.76, \$150,000, \$150 million
--an increase of 9 percent to 15 percent

ORGANIZATION NAMES--Always refer to organizations by their official names: American Farm Bureau Federation, not Farm Bureau; National Farmers Union, not Farmers Union; National Grange, not Grange; Iowa Farm Bureau Federation, not Iowa Farm Bureau; Maryland State Grange, not Maryland Grange. (Note: The official corporate name of the National Farmers Union is the Farmers Educational and Cooperative Union of America, but officials use National Farmers Union for all purposes except legal and corporate matters.)

PAGE NUMBERS--Except for page 1, all pages of news releases and other press materials should be numbered. The number should be centered, between hyphens, and placed two lines above the first line of the text.

PROGRAM NAMES--Generic program names are lowercase: food assistance programs, agricultural safety program; timber management program. Official program names are uppercase: Export Enhancement Program; Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention Program; the Food Stamp Program.

QUOTATIONS--Direct quotations are the exact words of a speaker or writer and should be surrounded by quotation marks. Indirect quotations paraphrase remarks and should not have quotation marks. Use quotations, especially direct quotations, sparingly in news releases, saving them primarily for opinion, policy explanation, and controversial or sensitive statements. Don't repeat in a quotation information provided elsewhere in the text of the release.

SERIES--List names of people, places or things in a narrative rather than tabular format, using commas and semicolons as required. Do not set items in columns unless you are listing more than 10.

SEXIST LANGUAGE--Men and women should receive the same treatment in all areas of coverage. Do not use stereotypes describing either sex. For example, don't give the impression that all farmers are men or that all consumers are women. Write "When farmers file their forms" instead of "When a farmer files his form," "consumers" instead of "housewives," and "six-member commission" instead of "six-man commission."

STATES--Spell out the names of the 50 U.S. states when they stand alone in text. Use state abbreviations with the name of a city, county or town. Use abbreviations listed below, not postal abbreviations. There are eight state names which are never abbreviated: Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Texas and Utah. A comma goes between the city and the state, and another comma goes after the state, unless it is at the end of a sentence. Examples:

--The new rules apply in Maryland, West Virginia and North Carolina.
--The office is in Charlotte, N.C.
--The office is in Boise, Idaho, near the federal center.
--The trail starts near San Francisco, Calif., and ends at the Oregon border.

State abbreviations:

Ala.	Ill.	Miss.	N.C.	Vt.
Ariz.	Ind.	Mo.	N.D.	Va.
Ark.	Kan.	Mont.	Okla.	Wash.
Calif.	Ky.	Neb.	Ore.	W.Va.
Colo.	La.	Nev.	Pa.	Wis.
Conn.	Md.	N.H.	R.I.	Wyo.
Del.	Mass.	N.J.	S.C.	
Fla.	Mich.	N.M.	S.D.	
Ga.	Minn.	N.Y.	Tenn.	

SYMBOLS--Avoid symbols in releases. Spell out degree and percent; don't use ° and %.

TELEPHONE NUMBERS--Use this format: (202) 447-4026

TENSE--Use the past tense for attributions, as though the statement has already been made. An exception is in feature releases, which may use the present tense. (Examples: Smith said statistics from the survey

will be available in June; The new vegetable varieties, Smith says, are very popular with the public.)

TESTIMONY--Place all pertinent information about testimony on the top of the first page. (See sample p. 26.)

TIMES--Except for noon and midnight, times should be expressed in figures, with a colon separating hours from minutes. Use a.m. or p.m. to indicate morning or night. (Examples: The meeting is 9-11 a.m. The meeting begins at 9:30 a.m. and ends at noon. The meeting will be 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The meeting will begin at 8 p.m. and end at midnight.)

TITLES--Do not use "Mrs.," "Mr." or similar titles. If someone with the title of doctor, including an agency administrator, prefers to use it, you may call the person "Dr. Susan Smith" or "Dr. Peter Ramsey" in the first reference, but use "Smith" or "Ramsey" in subsequent references. If the type of degree is important to the story, identify it--for example "Susan Smith, M.D." or "Sandy Clay, Ph.D." (See also CAPITALIZATION, p. 9; and NAMES, p. 11.)

TONS--Tons should be specified as either long, short or metric tons in the first reference. Use just tons, not LT, ST or MT, in subsequent use unless more than one kind of ton is involved. In that case, continue to be specific in each reference to ton.

Appendix I

PROCEDURES FOR EDITING, CLEARING AND RELEASING PRESS MATERIALS

This summary will help you understand how the News Division edits, clears, and issues agency news and feature releases and other press materials and why we need lead time to prepare materials for release.

First, when an agency notifies the public affairs specialist assigned to work on its releases, hereafter called the editor, that a release has been sent electronically to the News Division, the editor retrieves the text from the electronic mailbox, stores it electronically on a computer disk, and prints out a copy exactly as it was received. Since each editor works with several agencies, she or he may have to finish with one release before retrieving another.

The editor rewrites and edits the release as needed to make sure it conforms to USDA news policy and style. The editor discusses any major changes with the agency to ensure the revision is accurate. The release is then cleared with the chief of the News Division and the director of information. Depending on their availability, this may take a half hour to several hours.

The draft is then carried by hand to the appropriate under or assistant secretary's office for further clearance. This is done even if the agency has precleared the release with that office. At the same time, information copies of the release may be given to the Office of Congressional Relations and other offices with a similar need to know.

It may be several hours until the under/assistant secretary has a chance to clear the release and return it to the News Division. If the release is attributed to the secretary or the deputy secretary, or if they are mentioned in the release, they too must clear the release. This may take several more hours. If the release announces a personnel action, it must undergo further clearance.

After the release has been cleared, the News Division editor tells the agency writer of any changes made during clearance. The News Division coordinates the release time with Congressional Relations and informs the issuing agency. Scheduled release times are 10 a.m., 2 p.m. and 3 p.m.

The News Division distribution staff then makes copies for the in-house reporters and others who have mailboxes in room 404-A, and for the distribution rack outside 404-A. The staff issues the release at the official release time and delivers it to the reporters.

They enter the release into USDA's electronic distribution system (EDI), and fill out duplicating, printing and mailing instructions, so the copies can be distributed by daily messenger packets to reporters in the National Press Building and nearby locations, and mailed to out-of-town reporters.

Appendix II

SAMPLES

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NEWS

United States
Department of
Agriculture

USDA News Division
Room 404-A
Washington, D.C. 20250

Office of
Information

Kim Kaplan (301) 344-3932
Dave Warren (202) 447-4026

USDA PLANS FOR MAJOR GENOME MAPPING PROJECT

WASHINGTON, Feb. 17--In a major research effort, the U.S. Department of Agriculture is planning a plant genome program to unlock the genetic mysteries of the plant world. Research goals will be to identify genes present in important food and forest crops and determine what the genes do and how they function.

"A plant genome program is essential for the United States to maintain and strengthen its strong global position in agricultural efficiency and profitability," Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter said today.

USDA's Agricultural Research Service has been assigned responsibility for providing federal leadership in developing the genome mapping project. ARS will act as a focal point for a system of interrelated federal, state and university research.

While a variety of projects are now being conducted by federal, state, university and industry researchers to study individual parts of the genetic make up of some crops, there is currently no single major project to develop complete gene maps of the important food and forest crops.

Genome mapping develops a comprehensive picture of what genes are present in plants, their arrangement within the chromosomes, what traits they control and how they may do it. It includes identifying DNA sequences, gene functions, location of DNA markers that track gene sequences and developing gene maps, which assign genes to a particular chromosome.

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189-89

USDA news releases and other news, economic, and marketing reports are available electronically through USDA's EDI SERVICE. Call (202) 447-5505

Sample (News Release)

NEWS

United States
Department of
Agriculture

USDA News Division
Room 404-A
Washington, D.C. 20250

Office of
Information

Deborah Smith (202) 447-9173
Edwin Moffett (202) 447-4026

Advance for Release at 6:30 p.m. EST, Wednesday Nov. 30

USDA'S 1988 YEARBOOK EXPLORES AGRICULTURAL MARKETING

WASHINGTON, Dec. 1--"Marketing U.S. Agriculture," the 1988 Yearbook of Agriculture, was released today by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Secretary of Agriculture Richard E. Lyng said the yearbook's focus on marketing emphasizes that building farm productivity is only half the battle in keeping U.S. agriculture strong and competitive. "As our negotiators chip away at trade protectionism in the international marketplace, demand for high quality goods will expand, and opportunities for aggressive marketing will increase."

The 1988 Yearbook of Agriculture will help people understand the complexities and challenges in marketing agricultural goods, domestically as well as internationally, and possibly spark some creative solutions, Lyng said.

Each yearbook of agriculture is on a different subject. In this year's 336-page hardback, some 75 authors from industry, government and the academic community will examine each link in the agricultural marketing chain--highlighting technological and social changes affecting the system. The yearbook offers case studies emphasizing four key elements of marketing--consumer research, product development, delivery and promotion.

The new publication is aimed at a broad audience, said yearbook editor Deborah T. Smith. "Farmers may find the chapters on developing market strategies especially interesting. But the book's topic also will interest consumers, food processors, exporters trying to break into new markets, and entrepreneurs looking for challenges in agribusiness," she said.

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USDA News Feature

Sandy Miller Hays (301) 344-4089
Jim Greene (202) 447-4026
Issued: March 3, 1989

News Division, Room 404-A, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250

SCIENTISTS TRYING TO SWITCH CATFISH SEX

WASHINGTON, March 3--Scientists with the U.S. Department of Agriculture are testing a hormone called DHT that may switch catfish gender.

The research by Gary J. Carmichael and Cheryl A. Goudie of USDA's Agricultural Research Service is aimed at making the most of other scientists' findings that male catfish grow faster than females. Goudie is a reproductive physiologist at ARS's Catfish Genetics Research Laboratory, Stoneville, Miss., where Carmichael is a geneticist and research leader.



ARS scientists are trying to produce only male catfish in the lab by adding a hormonal agent to water containing catfish eggs. Males grow faster and would be a boom for domestic catfish production. Neg. No. 88BW2282-34

0200



Reproductive physiologist Cheryl Goudie and geneticist Gary Carmichael gauge the growth rate of catfish and their resistance to disease in varying water quality. Neg. No. 88BW2286-7

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245-89

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Sample (Feature Release)

In an article in the February issue of Agricultural Research magazine, Goudie and Carmichael note that the sex can be changed on young fish of many species by treating them with other masculinizing hormones, but those hormones have not been successful on catfish.

The ARS scientists' work follows eight years of catfish research at Memphis State University, Memphis, Tenn., and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Southeastern Fish Cultural Laboratory, Marion, Ala. Those researchers broke new ground in trying to evaluate sex determination methods and find ways to control sex in channel catfish.

Scientists at Memphis State University began working in May 1988 with the ARS laboratory at Stoneville on tests of dihydrotestosterone or DHT, believed to be one of the strongest hormonal agents for changing fish to males. Daily doses of DHT were added to fish eggs' water each day at one of three levels until the eggs developed into sac-fry.

Some of the fish then were taken off the treatment to grow normally from that point onward. Others continued the treatment for seven more days, until they developed into swim-up fry. The group was then divided again, with some of the young fish taken off treatment and others continuing the DHT dosages in their feed.

If evaluation of the fish shows that DHT succeeded in turning all the catfish into males, there should be little difficulty in getting Food and Drug Administration approval for human consumption of the sex-switched fish because DHT is a naturally occurring hormone in humans, said Carmichael.

"And we think the hormones in the fish will be metabolized by their natural body functions by the time we eat the fish anyway," he said in the ARS article.

The Stoneville laboratory's main work is in evaluation of various catfish strains for attributes such as ability to withstand disease or changes in water quality.

The article also describes other catfish-related research under way by ARS scientists, including a study of recirculating catfish pond water in Oklahoma and work in Louisiana on controlling pond algae that produce compounds that make the fish taste bad.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: For details, contact Gary J. Carmichael and Cheryl A. Goudie, Catfish Genetics Research Laboratory, USDA, ARS, Stoneville, Miss. 38776. Telephone (601) 686-2987.

Black-and-white glossy prints of the photos are available from Photography Division, Room 4404-S, Office of Information, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250; telephone (202) 447-6633. Request by negative number.

NEWS

United States
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Agriculture

USDA News Division
Room 404-A
Washington, D.C. 20250

Office of
Information

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS

WASHINGTON, Jan. 4--The U.S. Department of Agriculture will hold its 1990 budget briefing Monday, Jan. 9, at 1 p.m. in room 107-A of USDA's Administration Building, The Mall. Stephen B. Dewhurst, director of USDA's Office of Budget and Program Analysis, will conduct the briefing. Media only.

Contact: Diane O'Connor or Don Elder (202) 447-4026

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9-89

USDA news releases and other news, economic, and marketing reports are available electronically through USDA's EDI SERVICE. Call (202) 447-5505

Sample (Notice to Correspondents)

USDA

Program Announcement

News Division, Room 404-A, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250

USDA ANNOUNCES QUOTAS AND REFERENDUM FOR PUERTO RICAN FILLER TOBACCO

WASHINGTON, March 1--The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced marketing quotas for cigar filler (type 46) tobacco for the 1989, 1990 and 1991 crops. The 1989 national acreage allotment for this kind of tobacco will be zero.

USDA must proclaim marketing quotas whenever supplies of a particular kind of tobacco become excessive. Since an oversupply of cigar filler (type 46) tobacco currently exists, USDA proclaimed quotas and set the 1989 national acreage allotment at zero.

A grower referendum will be held at area polling places on March 29 to determine if growers want marketing quotas in effect for cigar filler (type 46) tobacco for the marketing years 1989, 1990 and 1991.

If growers vote in favor of the quota, quotas will be in effect for the next three crops and a penalty would apply for any 1989 crop marketings. If quotas are disapproved, production will not be limited and price support loans will not be available.

Contact: Bruce Merkle (202) 447-6787

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USDA Backgrounder

Diane O'Connor (202) 447-4026
Issued: Feb. 16, 1989

News Division, Room 404-A, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250

THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

The People's Department

CREATION The U.S. Department of Agriculture was created by an Act of Congress in 1862 ". . . to acquire and diffuse among the people of the United States useful information on subjects connected with agriculture in the most general and comprehensive sense of that word." The first commissioner of agriculture was empowered to conduct experiments, collect statistics, and distribute new seeds and plants. This broad law remains the legal authority by which USDA operates today. Seven men served as Commissioners of Agriculture.

CABINET STATUS Exactly 100 years ago, on Feb. 15, 1889, USDA became the eighth executive department to achieve cabinet rank. Norman J. Colman was named the first secretary of agriculture by President Grover Cleveland.

USDA TODAY Today, the secretary of agriculture administers broad programs aimed at maintaining America's safe, abundant, and reasonably priced supply of food and fiber, while protecting and preserving the nation's soil and water resources. USDA has a annual budget of about \$70 billion and has 112,000 full- and part-time employees, making it the fifth largest agency in the federal government.

DISPERSED WORK FORCE At its creation, President Abraham Lincoln said the Department of Agriculture was to be the "People's Department--closer to the people than any other." One hundred and twenty seven years later, USDA is still the federal agency closest to the American people. It has the most widespread distribution of offices and services throughout the nation of any of the executive departments of government. Most USDA employees work far outside Washington, D.C., located in almost every county in the United States and in many cities.

USDA employees are engaged 378 different occupations--a wide variety ranging from botonists, soil conservationists, and nutritionists, to loan specialists, meat inspectors, and forest rangers. Their activities not only touch the lives of every American daily, but affect the well-being of millions of people throughout the world.

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NEWS

United States
Department of
Agriculture

USDA News Division
Room 404-A
Washington, D.C. 20250

Office of
Information

Clarence Steinberg (202) 447-6179
Charles Hobbs (202) 447-4026

CORRECTION

WASHINGTON, Jan. 27--The U.S. Department of Agriculture listed two errors in names in its press release announcing appointments to the National Pork Producers delegate body (release number 92-89). Under Illinois, delete Glenn A. Woodcock; under Indiana, add Robert L. Huber.

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0076

92A-89

USDA news releases and other news, economic, and marketing reports are available electronically through USDA's EDI SERVICE. Call (202) 447-5505

Advisory Committee News

Issued through the facilities of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250

COTTON MARKETING ADVISORY COMMITTEE HOLDS FIRST MEETING

WASHINGTON, April 22--The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Advisory Committee on Cotton Marketing held its first meeting here April 13 to review marketing-related issues such as the classification of cotton by High Volume Instruments (HVI), the Commodity Credit Corporation loan structure, grade standards, cotton spot price quotations, and the Universal Standards Agreement.

"Over the next two years the advisory committee will review vital elements of the cotton marketing system and made recommendations for improvement," said committee chairman J. Patrick Boyle, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service. Boyle said that among actions the committee took at this first meeting were:

--supported having U.S. cotton industry representatives participate with foreign signatories on an equal advisory basis to recommend changes in the Universal Grade Standards for upland cotton. Presently, overseas signatories participate on a voting basis with USDA while the U.S. industry is limited to a non-voting advisory status.

--endorsed a proposal that AMS should fully assume spot quotations functions for each quality of cotton and publish daily the volume of cotton on which the quote is based. In recent years, a large number of trade representatives have withdrawn from participation in spot quotations committee meetings with AMS, prompting the suggested change in this function.

--established an eight-member subcommittee to identify the type of information needed from the industry for certain HVI quality factors so the committee can review and make recommendations for changes in the Commodity Credit Corporations's loan structure.

The Advisory Committee on Cotton Marketing consists of the Chairman, Boyle, and 16 members and eight alternates representing growers, ginners, cooperatives, warehousemen, merchants, manufacturers, and the academic and research communities. The next meeting of the committee will be Aug. 24 in Memphis, Tenn.

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362-88

Sample (Advisory Committee Announcement)

Remarks

News Division, Room 404-A, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250

EXCERPTS OF REMARKS BY SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE CLAYTON YEUTTER
AT HIS SWEARING-IN CEREMONY IN THE USDA PATIO
FEBRUARY 16, 1989

Thank you very much ladies and gentlemen. It's a marvelous privilege, pleasure and opportunity for me to be here this morning. As I look out over this audience I see a multitude of long-time friends and I am so pleased and gratified that all of you were willing to take time out of your hectic and demanding schedules to be here and share this occasion with us. I am not going to make any profound policy pronouncements this morning. I'd like to basically concentrate in my very short time with you on some comments about people.

First of all on behalf of everyone here, Mr. President, we want to thank you for coming over to participate in this ceremony. We know it requires time out of your schedule to do so and it's a tremendous gesture on your part to participate. It's an honor not only for all of us in the Cabinet to experience this privilege, but it's an honor for the people in all the departments including USDA who have opportunity to see you up close as a part of this ceremony. Thank you for coming.

Although you have heard many great things about President Bush during the campaign and through the inaugural, however; I would like to embellish those if I may by confirming and ratifying, if I may without question, this is one of the best prepared Presidents we have had in the history of the United States, one of the most substantive Presidents we have ever had in the history of the United States, both of those attributes and characteristics are going to serve us all well in the coming years. But more importantly, George and Barbara Bush are two of the finest human beings on the face of this earth. That is why it's a distinct pleasure for all of us to be a part of this Administration.

I want to say a word about Justice O'Connor if she'll forgive me for telling this anecdote one more time. First of all it's a great privilege for me to have her swear me in again, for the second time. She did the honors 3-and-a-half years ago as I took over as the U.S. Trade Representative

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181-89

Testimony

News Division, Room 404-A, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250

STATEMENT OF
EWEN M. WILSON
ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR ECONOMICS
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BEFORE THE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON COTTON, RICE AND SUGAR

February 22, 1989

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, I appreciate the invitation to appear at this hearing on the upland cotton program.

As you know, the Food Security Act of 1985 substantially changed the cotton program. The objective was to make U.S. cotton competitive in the world market. During the first year of implementation of the 1985 Act--the 1986 crop year--it seemed to work. Cotton exports more than tripled from the abnormally low 1985-crop export level, U.S. mill use increased 17 percent and carryover stocks were drawn down. Stocks which had grown to a two-decade high of 9.3 million bales were reduced to 4.9 million bales. Budget costs were large, over \$2 billion in fiscal year 1986, but the export gains seemed to justify this cost and people were optimistic that carry-over stocks could be kept to the 4-million-bale level deemed appropriate in the 1985 Act.

That optimism, however, has faded. Exports have not grown since 1986--they have declined. Stocks have not been held to the 4-million-bale level--they are now projected to be above 9

0161

198-89

Sample (Testimony)

Appendix III

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

DEPARTMENTAL REGULATION		NUMBER: 1440-2
SUBJECT: News Division	DATE: November 12, 1986	
	OPI: News Division, OI Office of Governmental and Public Affairs	

<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
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2 Policy	1
3 Abbreviations	2
4 Definitions	2
5 Responsibilities for Press Materials	2
6 Responsibilities for Media Relations	3
7 News Conferences	4
8 Limitations	4
9 Mailing Lists	5
10 Clipping Services	5
11 Electronic Compatibility	5
12 Policy and Style Guide	5
13 Letter of Agreement	5

1 PURPOSE

This regulation prescribes the policies and procedures for disseminating printed current information materials, principally press releases, backgrounders, notices to correspondents, and scheduled statistical reports, and for working with outside media representatives for all agencies of USDA.

2 POLICY

The policy of USDA is to use mass and specialty media as well as other methods to report, explain, and interpret to the public and specific interest groups the policies, regulations, programs, and activities of USDA. The Secretary has delegated authority to OGPA to determine policy and provide leadership and centralized operational direction for all USDA and agency information activities so that they shall promote understanding about USDA policies, programs, and activities.

The News Division is OI's organizational unit through which current information is released in written and electronic form to all branches of the news media through the issuance of press materials. These materials include news releases, features, notices to correspondents, scheduled statistical reports, testimony, speeches, issue briefing papers, and background pieces on current topics.

3 ABBREVIATIONS

AP - Associated Press
OI - Office of Information, OGPA
USC - United States Code
USDA - United States Department of Agriculture
OGPA - Office of Governmental and Public Affairs

4 DEFINITIONS

- a Press Materials. All current information materials designed for dissemination through the mass and specialty media, including releases, features, notices, reports, speeches and testimony, issue briefing papers and backgrounders.
- b News Releases. Timely news announcements--usually no longer than two double-spaced pages in length--issued to the press on events, situations, statements, or findings.
- c News Features. Articles that provide editors with informative stories that go beyond the straight news account of what USDA is doing. A news feature generally should not exceed four double-spaced pages.
- d Notices to Correspondents. Short notes that provide the news media with information about upcoming events. They usually should be no longer than one-half page.
- e Scheduled Statistical Reports. Recurring reports, often mandated by legislation, compiled by the various data-gathering agencies of USDA and issued by the News Division.
- f Speeches and Testimony. Texts of speeches and testimony given by USDA officials.
- g Issue Briefing Papers. Articles presenting the media and public with detailed information about all sides of an issue.
- h Background Pieces. Basic resource materials for reporters on topics currently of national interest.

5 RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PRESS MATERIALS

- a Agency Duties. Each agency information division is responsible for gathering news of national significance and making it available to the News Division, OI, in formats acceptable to the News Division; for the accuracy of statements contained in press materials about agency activities; and for clearance within the agency, including approvals as required by individual agency regulations and preclearance by the appropriate Under or Assistant Secretary. Each agency shall indicate to the News Division the name of the ranking agency official who cleared the press material. During the clearance process, press materials are to be marked "DRAFT," and agency and OI employees are not to show or discuss the contents with people outside the USDA.
- b News Division Duties. It is the responsibility of the News Division, OI, to clear all press materials with the appropriate people

in the Office of the Secretary, including final clearance with the appropriate Under or Assistant Secretary, with other federal agencies and departments, and with the press office in the White House, as necessary. If the News Division edits materials, it must notify the agency information office so the release may be re-checked for accuracy prior to official release.

- c Issuance of Regional Releases by Field Offices. Field offices shall make a preliminary determination as to whether or not press materials they are developing have national significance and, if so, send a draft to the agency information director. If that office agrees, the draft will be forwarded to the News Division for consideration. When releases initiated by agency staffs in Washington are intended for distribution through agency field offices, they shall be cleared through the News Division where they may also be provided to Washington correspondents. Should any agency's material be rejected for national release by the News Division, the agency may, upon authorization from the News Division, release the material regionally through the agency field office. Field offices are authorized to initiate and release press materials to news media within their geographic area only or to publications outside their geographic area which serve a specific trade group.

6 RESPONSIBILITIES FOR MEDIA RELATIONS

The policy of USDA is to cooperate with all media representatives when at all possible. This includes, but is not limited to, radio and television reporters, newspaper and magazine reporters, wire service reporters, and the agricultural and environmental trade press. The News Division is OI's organizational unit with overall responsibility for responding to the print media. Agencies contacted directly by media representatives should work directly with those representatives, but may request assistance from the News Division. Media calls must be given top priority since media representatives are often working on short deadlines. Failure to return calls to them may result in a negative image for all of USDA.

- a News Division Responsibilities. The News Division is responsible for coordinating all USDA-level media events. The News Division staff maintains media contact with all major newspaper, wire service, magazine, and trade reporters and is prepared to assist agencies when needed.
- b Agency Responsibilities. Each agency information director is responsible for notifying the News Division when it is planning a "media event." Each agency information director is responsible for seeing that the proper agency official returns media calls as quickly as possible.
- c Handling "Crisis" Situations. Each agency information director is responsible for providing the News Division with the name and home phone number of an agency "spokesperson" during an agency "crisis."

This spokesperson should be a knowledgeable program person who will make him or herself available to give interviews and talk to reporters during the "crisis."

7 NEWS CONFERENCES

News conferences are intended to serve wire services, newspapers, magazines, radio and television stations, and other commercial or public service media outlets.

When a news conference is held in Washington, D.C.; media representatives--including commercial newsletter editors and information officers with national organizations dealing with USDA issues--are invited to attend. Non-information officials from these organizations may be admitted only if their information officer is unable to attend and space is available. However, such people are only admitted as observers and are not permitted to ask questions.

The News Division arranges news conferences in Washington involving the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Under and Assistant Secretaries. Agency information directors may arrange news conferences for agency personnel or may ask the News Division to make such arrangements. In any case, the agency will notify the News Division when it begins to plan a news conference.

Attendance at news conferences held in the field may, at the discretion of the information officer in charge, include people not qualified to attend a Washington press conference.

8 LIMITATIONS

- a Promotion. Press materials shall not be used to promote USDA or any of its agencies or individuals. Materials that would be considered as "puffery" or "self-aggrandizement" will not be produced or distributed by agency offices or OI, and press materials will not be used to advance USDA, agency, or individual opinions on broad subjects without specific program reference.
- b Influencing Legislation. Press materials shall not be issued by USDA for the purpose of directly influencing Congress to vote for or against any legislation or appropriation. No press materials of a political nature (such as material critical of or aggrandizing elected or politically appointed officials, the Administration, or the Congress) shall be issued by agency information offices or OI. This restriction includes suggestions that the public contact elected representatives to support or oppose pending legislation. (See Title 18 U.S.C.)
- c Endorsements, Commercial References, and Use of Brand Names. USDA's policy is to avoid endorsements, directly or indirectly, of any commercial enterprise or product whenever possible. However, it is recognized that occasions may arise when mention of specific commercial enterprise or product is in the public interest or is difficult if not impossible to avoid. These occasions must be fully justified.

9 MAILING LISTS

The News Division will establish and maintain mailing lists to distribute press materials nationally from Washington. Agencies may set up mailing lists to serve their particular needs, both in headquarters units and in field offices. However, whenever an agency sets up a mailing list, it will notify the News Division and, if requested, provide a printout of the list and its intended use.



All mailing lists/codes, both in Washington and in the field, must be circularized and revised at least once every 12 months.

10 CLIPPING SERVICES

The News Division is responsible for providing the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and Under and Assistant Secretaries with feedback on what is being said in the popular and trade press about USDA policies, programs, and actions. Agencies with field offices are required to assist the News Division on a regular or irregular basis in fulfilling this responsibility by furnishing clippings of articles appearing in selected out-of-town newspapers when asked to do so by the News Division.

11 ELECTRONIC COMPATIBILITY

Any agency purchasing word processing equipment for use in information activities shall check with the News Division to assure the equipment being obtained can communicate electronically in a format acceptable to the News Division.

12 POLICY AND STYLE GUIDE

The News Division, OI, will maintain a policy and style guide to be used by all USDA and agency information directors in preparing press materials. The guide will provide policy and style guidelines not covered by these regulations. Any style questions not covered in the USDA style book should follow AP style.

13 LETTER OF AGREEMENT

An agency information director may ask that one or more exceptions to these regulations governing the conduct of public affairs activities be considered. The duration for exceptions granted will be 1 year. The exception(s) must be spelled out in an annual Letter of Agreement addressed to the Chief, News Division, OI. Deadline for this annual Letter of Agreement is May 15. The Chief, News Division, shall respond to requests for exceptions within 2 weeks following the deadline. An agency information director who does not seek exceptions to the regulations as written need not submit a Letter of Agreement.

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